

Message Text

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14-11

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

/064 W

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R 010850Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2296

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0936

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TC

SUBJ: UAE COUNCIL OF RULERS MEETING

1. MY CALLS ON SHAIKHS SULTAN OF SHARJAH AND HAMED OF FUJAIRA LAST FEW DAYS GAVE ME OPPORTUNITY TO QUERY THEM ABOUT SUPREME COUNCIL MEETING EARLIER THIS WEEK WHICH DISCUSSED MEASURES TO SOLIDIFY FEDERATION. OUTCOME WAS APPARENTLY STANDOFF BETWEEN SHAIKHS ZAYID AND RASHID WITH LATTER REQUESTING FURTHER TIME "TO STUDY MATTER" (AS ONE FEDERATION PARTISAN SARCASTICALLY COMMENTED HE HAS ALREADY HAD 3 YEARS TO DO THIS) AND COUNCIL AGREEING TO MEET AGAIN MAY 12.

2. ACCORDING TO HAMED AND SULTAN (THEMSELVES BOTH FEDERALISTS) SHAIKH ZAYID OPENED MEETING WITH EXTENDED SPEECH TO EFFECT THAT RULERS HAD RESPONSIBILITY NOW TO DECIDE WHETHER THERE WAS TO BE FEDERATION OR NOT. HE POINTED OUT THERE WERE MANY PROVISIONS OF INTERIM CONSITUTION THAT HAD NEVER BEEN CARRIED OUT BY SOME OF SHAIKHDOMS. HE STRESSED SECURITY THREAT POSED TO FEDERATION AS WHOLE BY POLICIES IN SOME OF EMIRATES THAT ALLOWED ENTRY TO FOREIGN WORKERS WITHOUT ADEQUATE CONTROL. HE SAID IT WAS TIME TO
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BRING VARIOUS EMIRATE MILITARY FORCES UNDER FEDERAL AUTHORITY. ZAYID

OFFERED IMMEDIATELY TO PLACE ABU DHABI DEFENSE FORCE UNDER FEDERAL MINISTRY IF OTHER RULERS WOULD FOLLOW SUIT.

3. ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMANTS NONE OF OTHER RULERS RAISED OBJECTIONS TO ZAYID'S THESIS. SHAIKH RASHID HOWEVER REFERRED TO COMPLEXITY OF ISSUES INVOLVED AND NEED FOR TIME TO STUDY MATTER THOROUGHLY. HE REPORTEDLY FIRST ASKED FOR 2 MONTHS BUT WAS WHITTLED BACK TO ABOUT 2 WEEKS WHEN SEVERAL OTHER RULERS QUESTIONED NEED FOR SO MUCH DELAY.

4. RASHID IS KEY MAN IN THIS MINI-DRAMA. HE ALONE AMONG RULERS HAS SUFFICIENT INCOME TO THUMB HIS NOSE AT FEDERATION IF HE WANTS TO AND STILL MAINTAIN DUBAI AS PROSPEROUS ECONOMIC ENTITY. SHAIKH SAQR OF RAS AL-KHAIMA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY LIKE TO BE IN SIMILAR POSITION BUT HE IS NOW HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON MONTHLY DOLE FROM ZAYID AND WILL NOT SPEAK OUT AGAINST HIM. RULERS OF SMALLER AND POORER SHAIKHDOMS ARE ALL SOLIDLY BEHIND ZAYID AND STRONGER FEDERATION. SHAIKH RASHID IS THUS UNDER GOOD DEAL OF PRESSURE, AND IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHETHER HE DECIDES ON MAY 12 TO TAKE THE PLUNGE INTO THE FEDERATION, OR WHETHER HE RESORTS TO FURTHER DELAYING TACTICS.
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